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Book Review

Embedded Librarians: Moving Beyond One-Shot Instruction

Margaret Gregor

Embedded Librarians: Moving Beyond One-Shot Instruction. Eds. Cassandra Kvenild and Kaijsa Calkins. Chicago: American Library Association, 2011. 235p. alk. paper, \$48.00 (ISBN 9780838985878). LC2011-014802.

Embedded Librarianship: Moving Beyond One-Shot Instruction provides a practical guide for embedding library instruction in a variety of disciplines, instructional delivery systems, departments, and academic institutions. Editors Cassandra Kvenild and Kaijsa Calkins, librarians at the University of Wyoming, have assembled sixteen chapters written by librarians embedded in different subject areas at every level of collegiate instruction. In their introduction, Kvenild and Calkins state that "by joining varied groups of patrons and assisting their research over the long haul, embedded librarians commit themselves to service in a very different way than they did in traditional one-shot bibliographic instruction."

Their goal in compiling this book is to illustrate how embedded librarianship can expand and extend library services and collaboration with faculty members across academic institutions. Models of successful embedding are described in detail, providing templates for librarians who wish to transition from one-session bibliographic instruction to embedded information literacy programs.

The first chapter, written by Matthew Brower, Business and Instruction Librarian at the University of Colorado at Boulder, describes the characteristics of embedded librarianship, offers a succinct history of this trend, and provides examples of embedding from the literature. He identifies six properties of embedded librarianship; among them are: collaborating extensively with faculty members; forming partnerships with department faculty members and administrators; and providing services that meet the specific needs of individual users. Embedded librarians also offer convenient, user-friendly services outside library settings; create a presence in places where students and faculty conduct their research and coursework; and have a deep, working knowledge of the discipline in which they are embedded. The case studies and reports in chapters 3 through 16 expand this list of characteristics and illustrate how librarians work with administrators, faculty members, and students to meet information and research needs in an embedded environment.

In the second chapter, David Shumaker, Clinical Associate Professor at the School of Library and Information Science, Catholic University of America and blogger at The Embedded Librarian (<http://embeddedlibrarian.wordpress.com>), encourages librarians to move beyond embedded information literacy instruction. He states that academic librarians "...have unique skills in information management, delivery, and analysis that can contribute to the research mission and serve the business strategy of the higher education

enterprise.” Shumaker suggests that academic librarians examine the embedded roles of their colleagues in health sciences and corporate organizations to identify strategies for becoming collaborators and research partners with faculty members. Maintaining that librarians can expand both collaborative relationships with teaching faculty and their services to the academy, Shumaker challenges readers to imagine how their roles might evolve.

The remaining fourteen chapters are divided into five sections that describe embedded instruction in the first-year experience, in online instruction, in disciplines and programs at the undergraduate, graduate, and professional levels, and in innovative spaces. Chapter authors offer detailed case studies and reports illustrating the techniques used to embed information literacy and library instruction at their institutions. These librarians describe their motivation for embedding information literacy instruction in a specific course, program, or department, either on or off campus, and explain the collaboration that must occur with faculty members to begin an embedded project. All authors stress that success is dependent upon effective and frequent communication with faculty and administrators. Some explain the benefits of being physically located in an academic department.

All authors outline the steps taken to design their instructional objectives and materials and note the challenges encountered in their efforts to embed. In addition, they detail the evaluation of their instruction, as well as the modifications made to improve and enhance their programs over time. They offer recommendations for replicating their efforts. Many supplement their chapter with statistics, screencasts, sample feedback forms, and assessment tools. The authors state that technologies such as Blackboard, Meebo, LibGuides, Camtasia, and YouTube facilitate embedded efforts.

Most of the authors include a section on the lessons that they learned from their experiences as embedded librarians and discuss the resources that are needed to sustain these efforts. They stress the intensity of embedded instruction and the necessity of being available to students over long periods of time. Several note that they transitioned to less labor-intensive means of serving students while still finding ways to maintain the level of personalization critical for embedded librarianship. All of them identified the value of evaluative feedback from faculty members and students, as well as the need to revise programs in light of this feedback.

Embedded Librarians: Moving Beyond One-Shot Instruction will be useful to librarians looking for “how-to” guidance on embedding instruction in a course, program, or department. The case studies and reports are well written, theoretically based, and adaptable, and the chapter references will benefit those who wish to read more about this topic. This book provides stimulating ideas for librarians who want to create, expand, or deepen an embedded librarian program and for those who wish to expand the role of librarians within the academy. It is recommended highly to all academic librarians.